

# CONSERVATION UPDATE

## 2010



State Senator  
**John Pappageorge**

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*Dear Friend,*

*Nestled among the sparkling waters of four of the five Great Lakes, Michigan is blessed with natural beauty, abundant resources and unmatched recreational opportunities.*

*We all have a role in conserving and protecting our natural resources so the rich outdoor traditions we enjoy today - whether camping in a state park, fishing along a favorite trout stream, boating on one of the big lakes or adding to a birding life list - can be enjoyed by future generations as well.*

*While there are many challenges in protecting our natural resources, invasive species pose one of the most significant threats to our land and water. I want to update you on the Senate's efforts to deter these dangerous pests, including Asian carp. I also want to share information on how you can play a role in funding our parks next summer when the new Recreation Passport becomes available on October first of this year.*

*With summer in full swing, I hope you and your family enjoy all that natural Michigan has to offer!*

*Sincerely,*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Pappageorge".

**John Pappageorge**  
State Senator, 13<sup>th</sup> District





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## Invasive species threaten Great Lakes

**A**quatic invasive species are the biggest threat to the health of our Great Lakes and inland waters.

These pests compete with native species for food and habitat. Some, like the sea lamprey and round goby, prey directly on native species.

Once established, invaders can cost millions of dollars

to manage each year. For example, the Great Lakes Commission estimates the cost to control sea lamprey in the Great Lakes runs \$20 million annually.

The Michigan Senate has long championed efforts to guard against invasive species, including our most recent support for further legal actions to keep Asian carp from invading the Great Lakes.



## Senate has long history of action on invasive species

**T**he Michigan Senate sounded the alert on the dangers of aquatic invasive species with the work of the Great Lakes Conservation Task Force in 2000.

The group concluded that invasive species, carried in the discharge of infested ballast water from ocean going vessels, was the most significant threat to the health of our Great Lakes.

When the federal government failed to enact laws to guard against ballast water discharge, the Michigan Senate passed the region's first ballast water discharge laws. These laws have served as a blueprint for other states and recently were upheld in federal court.

The Senate also led the way with an aggressive set of invasive species possession laws to guard against the introduction and infestation of non-native pests.

## Pappageorge urges federal action to stop Asian Carp

**A**sian carp pose a clear danger to the health, perhaps the very future, of our Great Lakes.

These destructive pests are ravenous feeders. In some of the pools along the Mississippi River, these carp species now make up 90 percent of the fish population!

A live Asian carp has now been found perilously close to Lake Michigan after making it past two electrical fish barriers, partially funded with Michigan dollars, in the Chicago Shipping Canal.

The Michigan Senate has repeatedly adopted measures urging the federal government to take immediate action to protect our waters.

A lack of urgency from Washington led the Senate in May to adopt Senate Resolution 162, a measure that urges the Michigan Attorney General

to pursue further legal actions to close down the Chicago canal and shut the door on a potential invasion.

Most recently, the Senate adopted Senate Resolution 166 admonishing the Obama Administration over failure to take action to prevent carp movement into the Great Lakes.



**Asian Carp**

*Photo credit: MU photo by Jason L. Jenkins.*

**Recently, the Senate adopted a resolution (SCR 37) urging an annex on aquatic invasive species to the 40-year-old Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement in order to create a region-wide plan to prohibit them.**

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## Pappageorge backs new passport to great family memories

In the last couple of years, you may have noticed many of our state parks have looked a little rough, in need of repair. Park fees simply haven't been enough to keep them up to par.

An exciting new concept - the State Recreation Passport - will change the way we pay for our parks by providing stable, long-term funding, even while cutting the park fee by 60 percent!

Public Acts 32-35 of 2010 allow Michigan residents to buy an annual park pass for \$10 when they pay their annual vehicle registration fee. The passport, a license plate sticker with a P for parks, will be good at 98 state parks and recreation areas, and all DNRE boat access sites.

The new fee, which eliminates the annual \$24 window sticker, is effective October 1, 2010. Out-of-state visitors will be required to buy a \$29 non-resident sticker or an \$8 daily pass, as they do now.

Michigan residents who don't want to use the state parks can simply decide not to pay the fee. But those who do support the program will help raise tens of millions of dollars to properly maintain these natural and cultural gems. **Count me in!**



Questions on the new Recreation Passport? Get answers at [www.michigan.gov/recreationpassport](http://www.michigan.gov/recreationpassport).

## Michigan Toll-Free Numbers:

Emerald Ash Borer Information.....866-325-0023  
Environmental Assistance Center.....800-662-9278  
Pollution Emergency Alert .....800-292-4706  
Radon Information.....800-723-6642  
Report All Poaching (RAP) .....800-292-7800



## Michigan Recycles! Coloring and Activity Book

Click on the book to learn about recycling with your young child.

## Senator Pappageorge announces local grants



I am pleased to share news of recent grant awards and recommendations that will help preserve the natural resources and quality of life here in the 13th Senate District.

- **Urban and Community Forestry Program Grant - Troy, City of - Lloyd Stage Nature Center(\$4,822)**
- **2010 Arbor Day Mini Grant Award - City of Birmingham (\$200)**
- **Lloyd A. Stage Nature Center (\$200)**



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## Pappageorge reminds boaters and anglers to help control spread of invasive species

**M**ore than 180 non-native pests, like zebra mussels and the round goby, endanger native Michigan fish and plant populations.

Boaters and anglers can help prevent the further spread of fish diseases and aquatic invasive species by taking these precautions:

- Empty livewells and bilges at the ramp;
- Thoroughly clean boats, trailers, nets and other equipment with a light bleach solution;
- After cleaning, allow boats and equipment to dry in the sun for 4 to 6 hours;
- Dispose of unused bait on the land or in the trash; do not release live bait into any water body; and
- Do not move fish from one body of water to another.

By damaging the ecosystem, invasives also harm recreational fishing and boating, industries that contribute billions to the Michigan economy each year.



Check out the newly consolidated **Department of Natural Resources and Environment** website here! The departmental consolidation was first proposed by Senate Republicans as a reform measure to save millions of dollars in administrative costs and provide a more holistic approach to natural resources management.

## Pappageorge supports new laws to target feral hogs

**W**hen you think of invasive species, pests like the Emerald Ash Borer or Asian carp come quickly to mind. Another larger nuisance also has the potential to be a big problem – feral swine.

These aggressive animals can carry at least 30 significant viral and bacterial diseases. They also damage crops and habitat, and prey on domestic animals and wildlife.

Public Acts 69-71 of 2010 (Senate Bill 1138 and House Bills 5822 and 5823) permit the shooting of swine running at large on private or public property by animal control officers, hunters or licensed gun owners.

Feral swine have already been sighted in 67 of our 83 counties. Across the country, they are estimated to cause \$800 million in damage each year.



## Could your car tires end up as garden mulch?

**A** recent report by the DNRE on the effectiveness of Michigan's Scrap Tire Program touts a high level of success in decreasing stockpiles of scrap tires and improving the reuse markets for scrap tires.

The report to the Legislature also indicates that remaining stockpiles of scrap tires could be cleaned up by the end of 2012.

In 1991, an estimated 30 million tires were stockpiled throughout the state, creating public safety hazards and environmental risks. Thanks in large measure to Senate Republican legislation, scrap tire refuse is now marketed as a commodity and converted into items such as road material, athletic tracks and mulch.

